

Testimony of David B. Bingham, MD of Salem, CT, regarding

**Raised Bill 81, AAC the Designation of Certain Areas
of the Housatonic River as a Wild and Scenic River**

My name is David Bingham, address 50 White Birch Rd, Salem, CT. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Raised Bill 81, AAC the Designation of Certain areas of the Housatonic River as a Wild and Scenic River.

While I do not live in the Housatonic River watershed, I join citizens from all over the State in recognizing the importance of this designation to our entire region. The Housatonic River is a major tributary to Long Island Sound, and the management of the River has significant impact to all who live downstream and who use the river and the Sound for fishing, recreation, tourism and spiritual renewal.

As we have discovered through designation of the Eightmile River, within my own home watershed, Wild and Scenic River designation brings national attention to the outstanding resource values of the area. This attention not only helps provide the necessary education of the public and elected officials for wise land use decisions to protect these resources, but also brings outside funding resources from public and private agencies, at both the State and national level, to assure better protection and management of the River.

Not only is this management important for improving the quality of our air and water, and for flood protection, but the river's riparian corridors are critical to the healthy ecology of our wildlife, with its intricate web of interactions with the whole community of nature, including humankind .

Pressures for inappropriate development and land use are significant. Without the education and recognition provided by Wild and Scenic River designation, there is a greater risk of adverse impacts and unwise land use decisions that are compounded over time.

I therefore urge the Committee and the legislature act to approve Raised Bill 81, for the benefit of our whole statewide community, its health and its economy.

Thank you.

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